Corrupt

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Category: Steven Universe
Genre: Adventure, Hurt-Comfort
Language: English
Characters: OC, Pearl, Steven U.
Status: Completed
Published: 2016-04-13 16:42:52
Updated: 2016-04-13 16:42:52
Packaged: 2016-04-27 18:41:50
Rating: K+
Chapters: 1
Words: 590
Publisher: www.fanfiction.net
Summary: "They've become corrupted and broken. We have to take care of them, subdue them, contain them. It's the best we can do for them, for now." What if all those corrupted Gem monsters used to be familiar faces to the Crystal Gems?

Corrupt

"They've become corrupted and broken. We have to take care of them, subdue them, contain them. It's the best we can do for them, for now..."

-Corrupt: A Steven Universe Oneshot-

Pearl tightened her grip on her spear, preparing for another attack when the corrupted-gem-snake creature stared right at her. That glint in its eye... That sparkle was all too familiar, even after all this time. Pearl felt frozen for a second.

*Flashback*

_A group of Crystal Gems: Pearl, Topaz, Azurite, and Rhodonite had headed out to locate the last of Homeworld's forces. They battled these last few Homeworld gems with all the power that they had until finally the Homeworld gems retreated back to where they belonged.
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As the last one finally fled, Azurite's eyes lit up as she began to cheer. "Whoo! Take that, Homeworld! You're no match for the Crystal Gems! Not even close!" she shouted, her voice echoing across the field.

Though Topaz would have liked to join in Azurite's celebrating, she held it in for a moment longer and shushed Azurite. "Quiet down, Az, they can probably still hear you!"

"Good!" Azurite responded. "I wanna smack that Jasper's ugly face right off the planet!"

But the Homeworld gems didn't return. The entire group began to celebrate. As they cheered and complimented each other on their moves and strategies, Pearl admired how Azurite's eyes sparkled as she spoke, an unmistakable shine that reflected the fierce determination that made Azurite herself.

*End of Flashback*

Pearl's eyes widened. She knew that glint. She knew that Gem!

"A-Azurite?" she whispered. The snake's eyes softened... in recognition, perhaps? Pearl's own eyes began to tear up, which caught Steven's attention.

"Pearl? Are you okay? Is... is that a...?"

"Steven..." Pearl sighed. It was going to be hard to explain this to him without bursting into tears. She took a deep breath. "Some of the corrupted Gems we fight... are former members of the Crystal Gems. Several of the damaged gems we don't reach before they go corrupt... were some of our closest friends. It... it's hard to see them like this."

"I'm sorry..." Steven murmured.

"It's not your fault," Pearl responded, putting a hand on his shoulder.

"But it makes you upset! I don't like to see you that way..." Steven reached out to hug Pearl. "Do you wanna keep her bubble in your room?"

"If the others are okay with it, I'd... really like that," Pearl said, returning Steven's hug with a small smile. _He really is just like his mother..._

- Time Skip (about half an hour later) -

When the Gems returned from their mission, Steven pulled Pearl upstairs to his room and sat down. "Do you... wanna talk about the Gem we fought?" The he quickly stopped himself, "You don't have to, if you don't want to."

"I'd be happy to tell you about her." Pearl smiled, sitting down next to the young half-Gem. "Her name was Azurite. She had an energetic, fiery personality and... she was an amazing fighter. She was... one of my best friends. You would have loved to meet her..."

"Maybe someday we can fix her."

Pearl smiled. "Maybe we can, Steven."

And in that moment, well, she almost believed it.

- End -

**AN: Here's your daily dose of feels. Just a little one-shot I've been working on. **

**I'm not going to spoil anything, but if you've read chapters 1 and 2 or my other story, Without Her, you'll want to keep that ending to this story in mind. ;) **

~Pikminsanity

End
file.